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# **NORMA:**

**A LYRICAL TRAGEDY,**

**TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH FROM THE ITALIAN OF**

**FELICE ROMANI,**

**AND ADAPTED TO THE ORIGINAL MUSIC**

**OF**

**BELLINI.**

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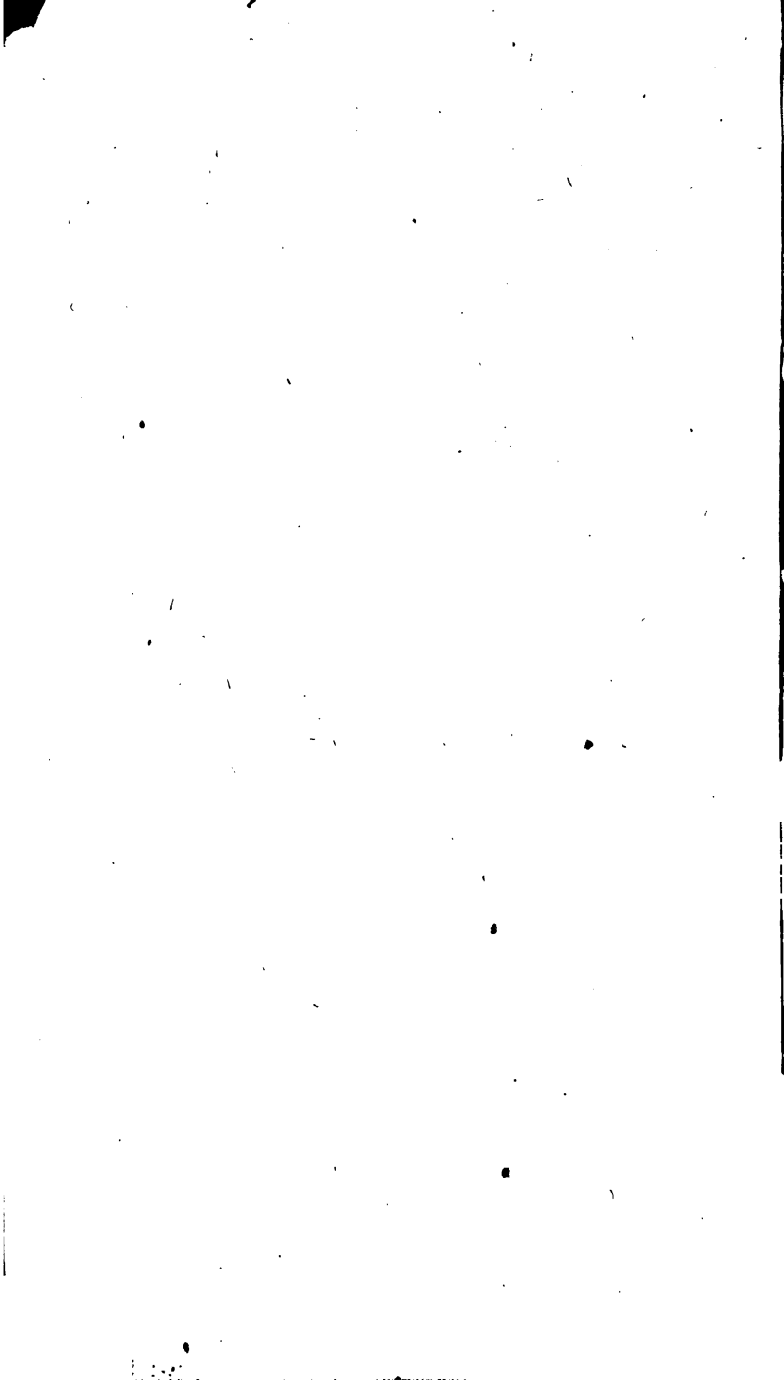
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**PRINTED BY JOHN H. GIBON & CO.,**

**Corner of George and Swanwick Sts.**

---

**1841.**



*Atwood from*

**NORMA:**

*Mr. Fry.*

A

**LYRICAL TRAGEDY,**

IN

**THREE ACTS:**

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF FELICE ROMANI.

AND ADAPTED TO THE ORIGINAL MUSIC OF

**BELLINI,**

*2*

**BY JOS. REESE FRY.**

*First performed in English at the Chesnut Street Theatre.*

---

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## **NORMA.**

---

**CLAUDIAN.** A Roman Proconsul over Gaul; secretly espoused to Norma.

**ORVESO.** The chief of the Gallic Druids and Father of Norma.

**FLAVIUS.** A Roman officer and friend of Claudian.

**NORMA.** The Chief Priestess and Superior of the Gauls.

**ELBERTA.** A noble virgin dedicated to the service of the God Irminsul.

**CLOTILDA.** A friend of Norma.

Two children of Claudian and Norma.

Chief Priests, Inferior Druids, Astrologers, Bards, Ministers and Virgins of the Temple of Irminsul, Gallic Nobles and Soldiers.

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The scene is laid in Gaul about one hundred and fifty years after the Roman conquest. The action is in and near the Temple of the God Irminsul, and occupies one night and the following day.

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[Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1841, by JOS. REESE FRY, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States in and for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.]

# ACT FIRST.

SCENE 1ST.—*The sacred grove near the Temple of Irminsul. Time, Evening.*

*Enter Chief Priests, Druids and Orveso.*

ORVESO.

Druids ascend yon mountain height,  
There watch the day declining,  
While all unveiled in silver light  
The crescent moon is shining !

There be your sacred duty  
To hail her virgin beauty,  
And sounding thrice the mystic shield  
Bid all to her meet homage yield !

CHORUS OF PRIESTS, &c.

Shine forth, young moon, beneath thy light  
Norma will sacrifice to-night !

PRAAYER.

Oh ! Irminsul prophetic Power,  
Be present in this awful hour :  
Against Rome's tyranny inspire  
Thy Priestess with puissant ire :  
Oh ! dreadful God, strike off the chain,  
Let Gallia be free again !

*Orv.* Yes ! guarding still this ancient wood  
Wherein his altars long have stood,  
Freedom on us he will bestow,  
Death on the eagle-bearing foe.

*Chorus.*—His arms divine then clashing,  
Like living thunder crashing,  
E'en to the seven-hill'd city's wall  
Shall echo vengeance with its fall !

Shine forth, young moon, beneath thy light  
Norma will sacrifice to-night ! *(Exeunt.)*



*Enter Claudian and Flavius.*

RECITATIVE.

*Cl.* All have departed, and their dread retreat  
Is silent. Freely may we enter now.

*Fl.* Who enters here shall perish :—so saith Norma.

*Cl.* Norma! What anguish doth that name awaken!

*Fl.* Oh wherefore feel thus, hearing Norma's name.  
The mother of thy children—

*Cl.* Thou sayst truly  
My children's mother,—my sole idol once :  
But that long cherished passion, in despite  
Of ev'ry struggle is departed now  
And proves me faithless to one faithful ever !  
Nor to this only care am I a prey ;—  
The future opens an abyss so dark  
I dare not look into its dreadful depths.

*Fl.* What—dost thou love another ?

*Cl.* Sad confession—  
Yes! 'tis a noble virgin, who is bound  
By oath to serve a vot'ress in this temple.  
In youth's sweet freshness blooming, and a  
gentle,  
Most artless creature, in her beauty peerless,  
She hath won from me all my heart's affections.

*Fl.* What hope hast thou in passion unreturned ?

*Cl.* I am not hopeless—

*Fl.* Yet dost thou not fear  
Norma's just anger ?

*Cl.* Aye! that harrowing thought  
Is present ever, and hath reared of late  
A life-like vision warning me to pause.

*Fl.* How ? Tell me !

*Cl.* With remembrance e'en, I tremble !

## CLAUDIAN.

When bound in slumber's golden chain  
 This dream stole gently o'er me :—  
 Methought that in a nuptial fane  
 Elberta stood before me.  
 As bridal songs then rose above  
 Our wedded faith was plighted,—  
 How swelled my heart delighted  
 With grateful transport, and with love !

But soon was hushed the strain of mirth,  
 Each eye in terror gleaming—  
 While rose a phantom from the earth,  
 In form a priestess seeming.  
 Fast flashed the lightning, gory red,  
 Bolt echoed bolt of thunder,  
 Cleaving the fane asunder,  
 All striking mute with dread.

No more my lovely bride was nigh,—  
 Sepulchral gloom prevailing  
 Bore from afar her suppliant cry  
 With infants' feeble wailing.  
 Then burst a sound more dread than all  
 My inmost soul appalling ;—  
 'Twas Norma sternly calling  
 Thus, heartless traitor, fall !

*(The brazen shield sounds.*

*Flavius.* Hark ! to perform their mystic rite  
 Norma leads forth her virgin choir !

*Chorus. (within)* Druids ! the moon is beaming  
 bright ;—  
 Strangers profane, retire !

*Flavius.* Come hence!

*Claudian.* No, leave me!

*Flavius.* Perils here  
Surround thee.

*Claudian.* Nay! I scorn all fear,—

*Flavius.* Farewell!

*Claudian.* Go thou, I will not flee.

*Flavius.* These mysteries none save Gauls may  
see;—

*Claudian.* No! treason prompts this secret rite,  
And rebels thus conspire.

*Chorus.* Druids, the moon is beaming bright,  
Strangers profane, retire!

CLAUDIAN.

Darkling storms now vainly lower,  
Never shall my spirit cower,  
Urged by more than earthly power,  
My love and my Elberta's charms.  
What though ev'ry vow unholy  
Bind her to these altars solely!—  
Blasted all and fallen lowly  
They shall yield her to my arms. (*Exeunt.*)

*Enter Druids, Astrologers, Bards, Soldiers, followed  
by Orveso.*

CHORUS.

Lo! Norma comes by virgins awaited,  
Solemn her pace, her fair brow elated,  
Bearing green boys to heaven dedicated  
While her sickle of gold shines afar!  
As she advanceth, Rome's glory waneth,  
Irmisul still omnipotent reigneth,  
Still supernal effulgence maintaineth,  
Downward hurling oppression's red star!

*Enter Norma and Virgins.*

RECITATIVE.

*Norma.* Seditious spirits ! who presumptuous thus,  
E'en at the altar's base calls you to war  
Unbidden ? Who dares cry rebellion now  
Ere the avenging moment is declared  
By Norma,—striving thus to speed the fate  
Of Rome yet unrevealed ? Infuriate men,  
Know her destruction waits not human power !

*Or.* How long beneath oppression must we languish;  
How long be spurned in silence and resign  
Our homes, our altars and our country,—all  
To foreign despots ? Shall the sword of Brennus  
That would leap forth to havoc, slumber still ?

*Chorus.* No ! no ! strike home for freedom !

*Nor.* Draw who dares !  
And may the sword unsheathed before its hour  
Faithless and broken prove ! The destined time  
For Gallic vengeance hath not ripened yet,  
Nor can the falchions of Sicambrian hordes  
Yet pierce the triple mail of Latin cohorts !

*Oru. & Cho.* But speak ! What doth our God fore-  
tell ? Declare  
His promise !

*Nor.* Listen Gauls, and learn heaven's sentence.  
On death's eternal tablets is the name  
Of proud and cruel Rome most darkly graven :  
There have I read her dire and certain doom.  
That doom ye cannot speed : the measure deep  
Of all her crimes o'erflowing, she ere long  
Must drain, and thus forever fall ! Peace now  
Compatriots and our hallowed work attend !

## PRAYER TO THE NEW MOON.

NORMA.

Virgin Goddess, beaming brightly  
 Where the pale stars glimmer nightly,  
 Smiling now in cloudless beauty  
 Hallow thou our votive duty,  
     Be propitious to our call!  
 May thy placed light assuaging  
 Calm these bosoms fiercely raging;  
 May thy presence felt divinely  
 Peace on earth diffuse benignly  
     As in heaven it blesseth all!

*Chorus.* Virgin Goddess, etc.

*Nor.* End these mysteries, ere intrusion  
 Violate this grove's seclusion!  
 When an omen from the altar  
 Proves our vengeance will not falter,  
 Mine shall be the voice to cry,  
 Strike valiant Gauls! proud Romans die!

*Chorus.* Yes! our cause is just and glorious;  
 Vengeance sleeps to wake victorious,  
 And whene'er the storm may burst  
 Stern Claudian shall perish first!

*Nor. (aside.)* First!—what Claudian perish? No!  
 This heart could ne'er endure the blow!

Ah! were my love requited  
 As when 'twas early plighted,  
 Against the world united  
     Belov'd! thy shield I'd be!  
 Oh! yes, this fond heart burning  
 Would welcome thee returning,  
 And all else earth spurning,  
     Its heaven would find in thee!

*Chorus.* The day approaches slowly  
 When hatred kindled ever  
 By constant wrongs unholy  
 Our shameful bonds must sever.  
 Then ev'ry foe shall be our prey—  
 Oh God of terror, speed the day!

*Nor. (aside.)* Ah! one bland look endearing,  
 One accent kindly cheering,  
 All thought of wrong would banish  
 And soothe my mem'ry's pain!  
 Then come! my spirit lonely  
 Still panteth for thee only,  
 Still in thy lost affection  
 Its life would find again!

*Chorus.* The haughty foe shall be our prey,  
 Oh! God of terror speed the day!  
(*Exeunt.*)

---

*Enter Elberta.*

RECITATIVE.

*El.* The sacred rites fulfilled, all have retired!—  
 To weep alone, I linger in this grove  
 Where first I knew unhaply, and confessed  
 My passion for this noble Roman. Here,  
 Arose rebellious thoughts against the temple.  
 Would we had never met!—Vain, false desire!  
 A sweetly magic influence bears me still  
 Hither to feed my fancy on this scene,  
 Recall his smiles of gentle fondness  
 And breathe the air endeared oft by his sighs.  
 Thus heaven have I offended,—all my vows,  
 My holy vows transgressed; the peace divine  
 That shone in childhood years hath fled!  
Oh Gods  
 If ye forgive me not, I am forever lost!

*Enter Claudian and Flavius.*

*Cl.* Lo! 'tis she!—Now leave us,—'tis vain to stay  
me! *(Exit Flavius.)*

*El.* Oh! thou here?

*Cl.* Aye, happily!—Why dost thou weep?

*El.* I have been praying—intrude not on me;  
I entreat thee, leave me, to my devotions.

*Cl.* The God whom thou adorest is unworthy  
Thy worship,—foe to thy peace and mine own!  
Ah! gentle virgin, then forsake that God  
For love's more genial service!

*El.* Nay false tempter,  
Name not love to me!

*Cl.* Dost thou fly from me?  
Whither canst fly that my love dare not follow?

*El.* E'en to the temple, there to serve forever  
As my first oath was plighted.

*Cl.* To the temple?  
But our love—?

*El.* I must forget it!

*CLAUDIAN.*

Go, proud maiden! thy God may proffer  
Sacred honors to deceive thee,  
But to win thee my blood I offer  
And unransomed ne'er will leave thee.  
When to that false altar driven  
Vows fell from my lips alone;  
But thy heart to me was given  
Ah still call that heart mine own!

*ELBERTA.*

Oh! this passion, this fatal error  
Fills my soul with strange emotion;  
At the altar I bow in terror  
Where I've knelt in rapt devotion.

Then in innocence adoring,  
 Heaven smiled and heard my prayer ;  
 Perjured now, in vain imploring,  
 God hath left me to despair !

*Claudian.* Yet the Gods of Rome would hear thee,  
 Happly thither let me bear thee !

*Elberta.* Art thou going ?

*Claudian.* At dawn to-morrow !

*Elberta.* I alas !—

*Claudian.* Pine not here in sorrow ;  
 List to love's blest voice alone,  
 Fly with me and be mine own !

*Elberta.* Ah, no more ! no more I pray thee !

*Claudian.* I must plead if words can sway thee,  
 Still I pray thee to depart !

*Elberta.* Leave me !

*Claudian.* Would'st thou break this heart ?

*Elberta.* Hence ! Oh heaven, I call on thee !

*Claud.* Wilt thou thus abandon me ?

Fly, Elberta, fly with me to Rome,  
 Regret and ling'ring fears dispelling  
 There, beloved, share my tranquil home  
 In mutual fondness ever dwelling.  
 Hark ! now hope's soft promise swelling  
 Is whispering bliss without decay !  
 Ah haste, the gentle call obey,  
 These arms shall bear thee far away !

*Elb.* Ever thus a winning voice I hear,  
 Like dreamy music stealing o'er me  
 While the eyes of love beam ever near,  
 Still sweetly bending to implore me.  
 Yes, this dear image e'en before me  
 Upon the altar stands impressed.  
 Oh ! God efface it from my breast,  
 Restore my pure and wonted rest !



*Cl.* List dearest !

*Elb.* Hence !

*Cl.* Must we sever ?

Oh ! fly with me !

*Elb.* Away ! no never !

*Cl.* Of hope—of life wouldst thou bereave me ?

*Elb.* Away ! alas, in mercy leave me !

*Cl.* Fare thee well.

*Elb.* Hah ! must it be

No ! no ! I will depart with thee !

*Cl.* My dear Elberta ! will thou swear ?

*Elb.* Oh ! heaven forgive me ! yes, I swear !

*Cl.* No longer now am I forsaken,

Never doubt my faith once plighted :—

*Elb.* Thoughts of heavenly joy awaken

May their promise ne'er be blighted !

*Cl.* Fear thee not, come dwell with me,

And blest in love forever be !

*Elb.* Though, my God, forsworn to thee

Faithful still to love I'll be !

#### SCENE 2ND.

An apartment in the dwelling of Norma.

*Enter Norma, her two children and Clotilda.*

#### RECITATIVE.

*Nor.* Take them, and conceal them quickly,—for  
strange

And dreadful fancies now forbid me e'en  
To look upon them.

*Cl.* Ah ! why troubled thus ?

Why feel but joy in dalliance with thy children ?

*Nor.* I know not, I am lost, bewildered now

With adverse passions. Love wins me to them—

Anon 'tis changed to hatred. Oft would I

Caress them ; but soon loathing overcomes  
My fondness, and amid these wild emotions,  
I know no longer if 'tis greater bliss  
Or misery to be their mother.

*Clo.* And thou a mother ?

*Nor.* Would that I were not !

*Clo.* Oh wretched confession !

*Nor.* 'Tis my least grief :—

For Claudian is recalled, and parts for Rome.

*Clo.* Thou wilt go with him ?

*Nor.* I have not yet learned  
His purpose.--What ! should he forsake me now,  
So long beloved ! Should he perchance forget me,  
Me and his children—

*Clo.* Believe it not—

*Nor.* I dare not ;—that fate is too dreadful far,  
Too overwhelming even for suspicion.—  
Some one approaches :—go and conceal them.

*(Exit Clotilda with the children.)*

*Enter Elberta.*

*Nor.* It is Elberta !

*Elb. (aside.)* Heaven support me ! [me.

*Nor.* Fair daughter, thou art welcome to approach  
Why dost thou tremble ?—I have learned thou  
would'st

Impart to me a secret of grave import.

*Elb.* 'Tis so,—but words now fail me :—

When daring to uplift my eyes, they meet  
Thy glance majestic, which reveals thy power  
By all obeyed and honored, my frail heart  
Shrinks in thy presence.

*Nor.* Come to me, poor child,  
Come, speak fearlessly,—tell me what afflicts  
thee.

*Elb.* Spurn me not from thee ; love, love is my grief.  
Long have I struggled, to o'ercome this feeling

And hoped at last to conquer,—but how vainly !  
Alas ! thou knowest not my perfidy,  
Yet conscience bids me own—my oath is broken.  
For love, I promised to forsake our altar,  
Nay to flee from our country !

*Nor.* Ill-starred virgin,  
Whose morn of life is shadowed, and with  
storms  
That may destroy thee!—But fear not to tell me  
How was thy heart so won?

*Elb.* In one sweet glance,  
One sigh, 'twas lost. When at the altar once  
I had knelt down, the object of my love  
Stood near me: the prayer I would have uttered  
Paused trembling on my lips, and in the smile  
That beamed intensely fond to meet my gaze,  
Another heaven, purer, brighter far  
Seemed opened to me.

**NORMA.**

Oh bitter mem'ry! Thus the lawless passion  
bound me,

Thus wove its bright and fatal spell around me.

*Elb.* Ah ! wilt thou hear me still ?

*Nor.* Believe me, yes ! I will.

*Elb.* Oft in the fane my furtive glance  
Seemed in his presence ravished,  
Solely on him as in a trance  
All thought and sense were lavished.

Oft too, a suppliant kneeling  
I heard him thus appealing :—  
“ Life of my soul, look on me  
Bend thy sweet eyes upon me ;  
Ah ! one sigh of favor give,  
Still, fair idol, let me live !”

**Nor.** (Insidious words! dark spring of my dejection;  
Thus was my heart robbed of its affection !)

*Elb.* Bland were the tones of his fervid love  
 As zephyr far distant sighing,  
 Milder his looks than the light above  
 At eve when slowly dying !  
 Made captive thus I languish—  
 Wilt thou relieve my anguish,  
 Kindly forget my error,  
 Leave me no more in terror ?  
 Ah ! thy sympathy impart  
 To allay this bursting heart !

*Nor.* (*aside.*) So too with passion's fetters  
 My heart was laden !  
 (*to Elb.*) Yes ! I will share thy sorrow  
 Deceived and injured maiden.

*Elb.* Assure my wand'ring thoughts, kind heaven,  
 Am I,—am I, now forgiven ?

*Nor.* Ah ! guiltless one, come to my arms,  
 I can reproach thee never ;  
 Then weep no more, calm all alarms,  
 Thy bonds I break forever.  
 Go, where thy faith is plighted  
 Thy fond desire fulfil,  
 And with thy love united  
 Live on, be happy still.

*Elb.* Speak, speak again ! If doubt be past  
 To heaven thy words have borne me ;  
 By thee, by thee are soothed at last  
 The torments that have torn me.  
 Now swell my heart delighted,  
 No more with sorrow thrill ;  
 In guiltless love united  
 I may be happy still !

*Nor.* But who is this beloved youth? Declare  
His name and country.

*Elb.* Not a son of Gaul,  
Though dwelling here,—he is a Roman.

*Nor.* What!  
A Roman! Who? Speak! Tell me!

*Enter Claudian.*

*Elb.* Behold him!

*Nor.* Whom? Sayst thou Claudian?

*Elb.* Yes, Claudian.

*Nor.* Did he,

Did he then woo thee?

Tis well!—tis enough!

*Elb.* Ah yes!

*Cl.* Infatuate girl! what hast thou said?

*Elb.* I! [self!

*Nor.* (to *Cl.*) Tremblest thou? Aye, tremble for thy-

But fear not for this sinless maid

To mis'ry too by thee betrayed!

And think not my revenge will fail,

Nor hope of mercy cherish,

But now, perfidious monster, quail—

Thy children too shall perish.

Earth's fellest woes shall fire thy brain;

Tremble! thou tremblest not in vain!

*Elb.* What sayst thou?—I would hear from thee—

No—no!—Be silent now!—Ah me!

*NORMA.*

Oh! what a hapless maid art thou,

Fate hath accursed thy being,

Death were for thee far better now

Vainly the scourge of mem'ry fleeing.

Weep, weep! so too my tears have gushed

By damned treachery started,

When peace and hope departed

Leaving the heart blasted, withered, crushed!

## ELBERTA.

Oh! from what bright and blissful dream  
 In terror do I waken;  
 Hope's dawning rays no longer beam  
 To guide me wretched and forsaken!  
 Why is the voice of promise hushed,  
 Why are the vows oft spoken  
 To me untimely broken,  
 Leaving my heart blasted, withered, crushed?

## CLAUDIAN.

(*to Nor.*) Hold! hold, in vain dost thou upbraid,  
 I scorn thy futile madness,  
 And still will prove this weeping maid  
 Bright smiles may follow drops of sadness.  
 (*aside.*) Yet whither have I madly rushed?  
 My oath is doubly broken—  
 E'en now remorse hath spoken! [hushed?  
 Fell demon! when will thy dread voice be

*Nor.* Traitor, hence!

*Cl.* Peace now!

*Nor.* Yes—begone!

*Cl. (to Elb.)* Ah come—

*Elb.* No, leave me! speak no more, thus to thy wife  
 Unfaithful.

*Cl.* What I was, I have forgotten,  
 I only know that now I love thee!

*Elb.* Hence!

*Cl.* Fate binds my feelings and enchains my will—  
 Ah! yield to fate, receive and love me still!

*Nor. (to Elb.)* Nay hold!—Yes—love him still, fly  
 with him!

*Elb.* Fly?

Ah! no, no, never! Bid me rather die!

*Nor.* (to *Cl.*) Miscreant hence ! begone, I scorn thee,  
 Casting off the love I've borne thee,  
 Leave thy wife and children lonely  
 Who will live to curse thee only !  
 Joy no more thy breast inspire !  
 Woe attend thy foul desire !

*Cl.* Rage as thou wilt, thy threatning madness  
 Cannot bring remorse or sadness ;  
 Love and hope must still inspire  
 Proud defiance to thy ire !

*El.* Ah, pardon me, to whom are owing  
 All thy bitter tears now flowing.

*Nor.* Waves and winds can never urge thee  
 Where remorse shall cease to scourge thee.  
 Curses falling night and day  
 Shall waste thy tortured soul away !

*Cl.* (*aside.*) Why alas ! hath peace been banished,  
 Why hath love's soft radiance vanished ?  
 (to *Nor.*) Thrice accursed be the day  
 That first gave me to thy sway !

*Elb.* Seas and mountains ! may ye sever  
 One so base from me forever !

(to *Cl.*) Traitor, leave me still thy prey :—  
 Despair will speed my life's decay !

[END OF ACT FIRST.]

## ACT SECOND.

SCENE FIRST.—*An apartment in the dwelling of Norma. Her two children sleeping on a couch.*

*Enter Norma, with a lamp in one hand and a poignard in the other.*

## RECITATIVE.

NORMA.

Both now are sleeping ; nor will see the hand  
Prepared to slay them. Now, be firm my heart :—  
They must not live!—Here,—’tis one struggle only,  
But if borne hence to Rome, they live to know  
Their shame, and find perchance a foreign mother!  
Ah no !—no never !

They shall die ! Yes——

——I cannot approach :—my blood is frozen,—  
Nerveless my arm !—What ! what would I do ?  
Destroy my offspring ?

Poor, darling babes ! how calmly rest you :  
How oft in speechless joy have I caressed you,  
When in your smiles, shed guilelessly upon me,  
Methought I felt heaven’s pardon beaming on me!

And can I kill them now ? What is their guilt ?  
That they are Claudian’s children !—This is fatal !  
Dead to myself already, they shall be  
Dead to him forever ; thus will I punish  
His base desertion.—Now, to strike——

Ah no !

They are my children—my children !

(*calling.*) Come hither, Clotilda.

*Enter Clotilda.*

Hasten, conduct

Elberta to me.

*Clo.* Lonely she is watching [prayers.  
And wakes night’s stillness with her sighs and



*Nor.* Go !

(*Exit Clotilda.*)

Mine the guilt, the atonement shall be mine,  
In death !

*Enter Elberta.*

*Elb.* What wouldst thou, Norma ? Why so pallid  
Thy cheek,—so sad thy look ?

*Nor.* 'Tis death's own warning :—  
Behold me, thy heart broken rival now !  
I ask one only boon of thee :—Wilt hear me,  
And promise to fulfil my last desire ?

*Elb.* All, all to thee I promise.

*Nor.* Wilt thou swear it ?

*Elb.* I swear it !

*Nor.* Listen !—To free the temple  
Of my unworthy and polluting presence  
I have resolved ; yet cannot take with me  
These helpless infants ;—to thee I confide them !

*Elb.* Oh heaven !—confide to me thy children ?

*Nor.* Go to the Roman camp ; take them to him,  
To name whom I dare not.

*Elb.* How shall I meet him

*Nor.* Meet him !—as thy husband ! I can forgive—  
And die !

*Elb.* My husband ? What sayst thou ?

*Nor.* By thy affection, by thy ev'ry hope  
I do conjure thee !

Take them, I implore thee take them,  
Cherish, guard, oh ne'er forsake them !  
Grant them not or wealth or power  
Though 'twere thine these gifts to shower :  
Leave them not, I crave this only  
Thus degraded, wretched, lonely.  
Know for thee my heart is broken  
Once with pure affection blest ;  
Ah then grant the prayer I've spoken  
Soothe one pang that wrings my breast !

*Elb.* Norma, thou in joy wert dearest—

Still in grief I hold thee nearest !

Of thy children could I reave thee ?

No!—and never will I leave thee !

*Nor.* Wilt thou swear this ?

*Elb.* Yes ! I swear it,

And what'er thy lot, wilt share it.

Fain would I to Claudian kneeling

Now invoke each gentle feeling,

For my lips have learned to borrow

Pathos from thy touching sorrow ;

Thus my ardent prayer may waken

Fond regret and love again ;

To his anxious bosom taken

Thou alone mayst happily reign !

*Nor.* What ! thou be suppliant for me ! no, never !

*Elb.* Norma, ah listen to me !

*Nor.* Cease thy entreaty

And go now ! hence—

*Elb.* Alas ! I cannot.—

See, oh Norma, thy infants loving

Once thy joy, still thy solace proving,

At thy feet now in accents moving

Lone and helpless thy guardian pity claim !

*Nor.* Ah, why touching each deep affection

Strive to banish my soul's dejection ;

What can brighten the dark reflection

That I am fated to die in woe and shame ?

*Elb.* Sad mother, hear fond nature's plea !—

*Nor.* With love, all, all is reft from me !

*Elb.* Shall I plead vainly.

*Nor.* Am I not deserted ?

*Elb.* No ! he may love thee still !

*Nor.* And thy own love ?—

*Elb.* It is a crime I have repented,—

The temple now I seek contented.

*Nor.* Beware, rash girl! what wouldst thou own?

*Elb.* I swear by ev'ry power above

There to renounce all human love

To serve our deity alone!

*Nor.* Thou hast conquered! come unto my heart,

My dearest—sole companion still thou art.

*Together.* Thy sole companion, oh now receive me,

Faithful in woe or weal, oh! believe me;

With thee will I share each ling'ring pleasure

Or drain for thee death's abhorrent measure!

Fondly devoted as thou art,

Come, thou loved one, to my heart

And oh! never from me part!

#### SCENE 2ND.

A romantic part of the sacred forest. In the distance a lake spanned by a bridge.

*Enter Gallic Warriors.*

#### CHORUS.

Still our foes maintain their camp

Thus free from all alarms;

Still we hear their savage songs

And clang of hostile arms.

But Romans tremble! for the hate we cherish

Will never slumber until ye perish:

Beware! although ye revel now securely,

The blow, ye fear not, shall descend more surely,

And vengeance, as a tempest, calm at first,

O'er you ere long more dreadful far shall burst.

Silent, patient, aye! too long

Have we bowed to ev'ry wrong! (*Enter Orveso.*)

*Orv.* Brave warriors! methought your ardor  
sharing, [bearing:  
To meet you here, more grateful tidings  
Fain would I lead you forth against the  
Romans  
But now our God refuseth favoring omens.

*Cho.* What then! still are we unhappily fated  
To see our groves and temples desecrated?  
What canst thou promise?

*Orv.* A darker fate before us :—  
Rome sends another tyrant to rule o'er us !

**Cho.** And must we still in slavish peace remain?

*Orv.* I sought of Norma better hopes to gain;—

**Cho.** What hath she counselled ?

*Orv.* That ye now await  
The sure, though darkly hidden course of fate,  
Abandoning this vain endeavor  
To cast off our galling chain :—

**Cho.** Nay ! then shall we wear it ever ?

*Orv.* This cruel sentence must remain.

Yes ! my bosom indignant swelling  
Pants for conflict with the foe ;  
Oh that heaven, all doubt dispelling,  
Death or freedom would bestow !

**Cho.** Let us yield, submission feigning  
Still our secret hope maintaining.

*Orv.* Warriors ! though your hearts are fired  
Dare not now the foe engage :  
When they deem your wrath expired  
All consuming shall it rage.

*Org. and Cho.* Though we pause, no heart will falter  
When inspired by war's alarms;  
Warned by signals from the altar  
Myriads will rush forth to arms !

[END OF ACT SECOND.]

## ACT THIRD.

SCENE 1ST.

The Temple of Irminsul.

*Enter Norma.*

He will return ! my fond reliance is  
 Upon Elberta's intercession. Yes !  
 He will return repentant, craving pardon,  
 And trust renewed ! Oh ! in that blest reflection  
 Remembrance of all wrong and sorrow cease  
 And to my ravished vision opes the future  
 Sweetly glorious with love and perfect bliss !

*Enter Clotilda.*

Clotilda !

*Clo.* Norma, all our hopes are fled.

*Nor.* What sayst thou ?

*Clo.* Alas !

*Nor.* Nay, speak on !

*Clo.* In vain

Elberta wept, in vain entreated !

*Nor.* Fool

That I was to trust her on that errand ;—  
 To send her, far more beauteous in her grief,  
 Into the traitor's presence :—or hath she  
 Deceived me ?

*Clo.* No, returning to the temple  
 She weeps in greater anguish, and prefers  
 Again her holy vows.

*Nor.* And he

*Clo.* And he

Did swear to snatch her from the very altar.

*Nor.* Too far the wretch presumeth ! My revenge  
Yet shall crush him, and every Roman who  
Profanes our soil, shall fall with him my victim.

*Norma strikes the sacred shield.*

---

*Enter Priests, Soldiers, Virgins and others.*

### CHORUS AND RECITATIVE.

*Cho.* Hark ! the bronze shield is clanging ! Lo  
Norma, all

Assemble to obey the horrid call,  
What bodes the sound ? we wait thy relation.

*Nor.* Slaughter ! havoc ! extermination !

*Cho.* To open war now are we bidden,  
May our rage no more be hidden !

*Nor.* The God of battle whirls his gory car ;  
Revenge, blood, death he thunders :  
Shout, Gauls ! the cry for war !

### WAR SONG.

WARRIORS, PRIESTS, &c.

Battle ! battle ! ye heroes now calling,  
Rush like waves of the wild roaring flood ;  
Fierce as wolves on the sheep-fold when falling,  
Glut your deep hate in Rome's dearest blood.

Slaughter ! slaughter ! the cry loud and daring  
Speeds all onward vindictive, unsparing :  
Cleave your foes down when ruthless ye sally  
As the scythe mows the green waving valley !

Then will Rome's eagle stricken and gory  
Wave no longer his pinions afar,  
While the God who exults in our glory  
Rides triumphant his storm-bearing car !

ORVESO.

Our votive rites, oh Norma, yet require  
A victim.

Nor. One shall be ready,—for never  
Was our altar athirst in vain for blood.  
—But why this tumult?

*Enter Clotilda.*

Clo. Oh friends, the inmost temple by a Roman  
Hath been profaned, who but now was discovered  
Within the cloisters.

Cho. A Roman?

Nor. A Roman?

Should he have dared——

Cho. Haste, drag him hither!

*Enter Claudian, fettered and guarded.*

Nor. Yes!

'Tis he! 'tis Claudian!—I am revenged  
Upon him!

Orv. Impious intruder, wherefore  
Hast dared profane by thy unworthy presence  
The secret shrine of Irminsul?

Cl. Slay me!

I answer not thy questions.

Nor. He shall perish

And by my hand!

Cl. Those accents!—Norma!

Nor. Yes, Norma!

Cho. Let the sacred poignard drink  
His blood—

Nor. Yes, I will strike—ah!

Cho. Why dost tremble?

Nor. (*aside*) Ah, no! I cannot—

Cho. Nay! why dost thou falter?

Nor. (*aside*) Can I feel pity now?

Cho. Quick—slay him.

*Nor.* (after a pause) Yes!  
 And yet methinks 'twere better with him now  
 To speak alone, and thus endeavor  
 To learn the motive of his mad intrusion.  
 For this intent, one moment leave us.

*Cho.* What is her purpose? [*Ex. Orv. and Cho.*  
*Cl.* I tremble.

---

*Nor.* Chained at last, I find thee near me  
 Where no hand thy bonds can sever,  
 Save mine only :—

*Cl.* Thine ! no, never !

*Nor.* Yet I would free thee.

*Cl.* Wherefore ?

*Nor.* Hear me !

By thy Gods ! omniscient power,  
 Swear that thou wilt, from this hour—  
 Leave Elberta,—aye ! forsake her ;  
 Swear from the temple ne'er to take her !  
 Thy treason then will I forgive  
 And base ingrate, thou yet mayst live !  
 Swear it !

*Cl.* No ! not so vile am I !

*Nor.* Swear it !

*Cl.* Far sooner will I die !

*Nor.* Remember ! thy just doom fulfilling  
 I now may slay—

*Cl.* Strike—I am willing !

*Nor.* Know then, o'er thy children even  
 With this poignard—

*Cl.* My children !—Oh heaven !

*Nor.* Yes ! at their trembling hearts I held it,  
 Where thy long cruelty impelled it :—  
 I struck not !—Still who will save them  
 If I would take the life I gave them ?  
 In frenzy soon I may forget  
 My children—Aye ! destroy them yet !



*Cl.* Savage parent, if nature sway thee  
 Stifle not her holy cry !  
 Slay me only, ah, I pray thee  
 Spare our babes and let me die !

*Nor.* Seas of Roman blood now flowing  
 Could not quench the rage here glowing !  
 And Elberta, who hath broken  
 Her vows to heaven—

*Cl.* What hast thou spoken ?

*Nor.*—The victim of thy cursed guile  
 Shall perish on the burning pile !

*Cl.* Bury here thy fatal blade,  
 But save, oh save that gentle maid !

*Nor.* Hah ! thou at last, false one, dost cower !  
 In her death I'll prove my power :  
 Live now to suffer all thou fearest,—  
 Feel in her fate, thine own severest.

*Cl.* See ! I humbly kneel before thee  
 And in agony implore thee !

*Nor.* Thus thy treason expiated  
 Will my deep revenge be sated,  
 While my injured soul elated  
 Revels in thy ling'ring woe !

*Cl.* Can my prayer no mercy waken  
 For one guiltless and forsaken ?  
 Bid my life e'en now be taken—  
 Grateful will I strike the blow !

## RECITATIVE AND FINALE.

*Cl.* Give me thy poignard !

*Nor.* Durst thou ? off !—avaunt !

*Cl.* Oh give me thy poignard !

*Nor.* Ho there ! assemble !

Warriors ! Gauls ! assemble.

(*Enter Warriors, Druids and other characters.*)

Priests of our temple,  
Raise now your blazing pyre ; for one, whose  
vows

Are broken I must offer to your ire ;—

A priestess perjured to her God and country.

*All.* Most foul and heinous crime ! Declare her name.

*Nor.* Light the atoning fire !

*Cl. (to Nor.)* Still I entreat thee  
Be merciful.

*All.* Unveil her !

*Nor.* Aye ! hear ye :—

(*aside.*) What now, if I betray the innocent,  
Myself escaping ?

*All.* Declare her name !

*Cl.* Ah ! name her not.

*Nor.* 'Tis I ! Norma !

*All.* Thou ?

Norma ?

*Nor.* I, myself !—Bring hither too Elberta.

*All.* Oh, horror, horror !

*Cl. (to Nor.)* Now hope, farewell !

*Cho.* Art thou the victim ?

*Cl.* Nay do not believe her.

*Nor.* Norma hath spoken !

*All.* Terrific fate !

*Nor. (to Cl.)* Do I not prove thee  
 How I must love thee  
 Thus with thee sharing a doom of terror,  
 Yes ! hoping brightly,  
 Still beating lightly  
 My heart might feel not regret or fear !  
 But false love swayed thee,  
 And hath betrayed thee,  
 And haughty Roman, quail for thy error ;  
 For in this hour  
 Shall flames devour  
 Thee ! faithless being still held most dear.

*Claudian.* Oh dread reflection !  
 Thy true affection  
 Too late convinceth my frenzied reason ;  
 Truth flashing o'er me  
 Unveils before me  
 The ghastly vision of shameful death !  
 I own I left thee,  
 Of peace bereft thee,  
 Thy love repaying with heartless treason ;  
 Then doom me only,  
 I'll perish lonely,  
 And bless thee, e'en with my latest breath !

*Cho.* Confess, oh Norma ! this awful story ;  
 Relieve of anguish thy parent hoary !  
 What crime hath shadowed the altar's glory ?  
 What recreant virgin transgressed her vow ?  
 Oh happily tell us, oh tell thy sire  
 Dread fancies only thy words inspire :  
 Perchance no victim to heavenly ire  
 Thou wilt deliver to torments now !

*Enter Elberta and Attendant Virgins.*

*Cho.* Norma, behold, Elberta now is here ! [too

*Nor. (aside.)* Poor maiden ! must she suffer ? and I

Condemned, my children will be helpless orphans.

*Elb.* Ah Norma ! canst thou thus condemn me ?

Thou,

Who didst once pardon me ?

*Nor. (aside.)* What would I do ?

Base purpose ! I cast it from me now !

*Cl.* Oh misery !

*Cho.* Norma, unveil the victim.

*Nor.* Behold then, Norma herself, perjured,—guilty !

*Cho.* Madness !

*Nor.* Nay, past belief, is my offence !

*Orv.* Agony !

*Elb.* Friend most generous, ah save

Thyself.

*Nor.* No ! live thou virtuous and blest !

*Cl.* Matchless devotion !

*(Aside to Orv.)* Listen now !

*Orv.* Alas,

My daughter !

*Nor.* I am a mother !

*Orv.* A mother !

*Nor.* Ah father, hear my only prayer ;

My children—take them to thy care :

Poor orphans, in a parent's name

Let them thy kind protection claim !

*Orv.* Base wretch, no never !—Infamy !—

*Nor.* Ah father, still I kneel to thee !

Oh curse me but my infants spare,  
 Crush not the budding flower  
 In life's sweet morning hour  
 Whose frailty claims thy care !  
 Them harmless, guileless, tender,  
 To fate wilt thou surrender ?  
 Ah ! this breast their being gave,  
 Thine own blood, oh father save !

*Cho.* See his eyes with tears now glisten :  
 What ! in pity will he listen  
 To his impious daughter's grief ?  
 No ! her moments must be brief.

*Cl.* Ah will she thus in vain implore—  
 He weeps ! Oh heaven, I ask no more !

*Nor.* Father, thou weepest ! have pity on me—  
 With kind compassion oh look upon me !

*Orv.* My heart is stricken with her grief—  
 Oh yes, I pledge thy soul ! relief !

*Nor.* I now am happy :—my pangs are o'er !  
 Thus blest, oh heaven, I ask no more !

*(Norma to Claudian drawing her dagger unseen by  
 the rest.)*

For this poignard thou hast besought me !—  
 Though to perdition thou hast brought me,  
 Take it now, unworthy as thou art !—

*Cl.* Oh why have I destroyed thy godlike heart ?

*Orv.* Hapless daughter—

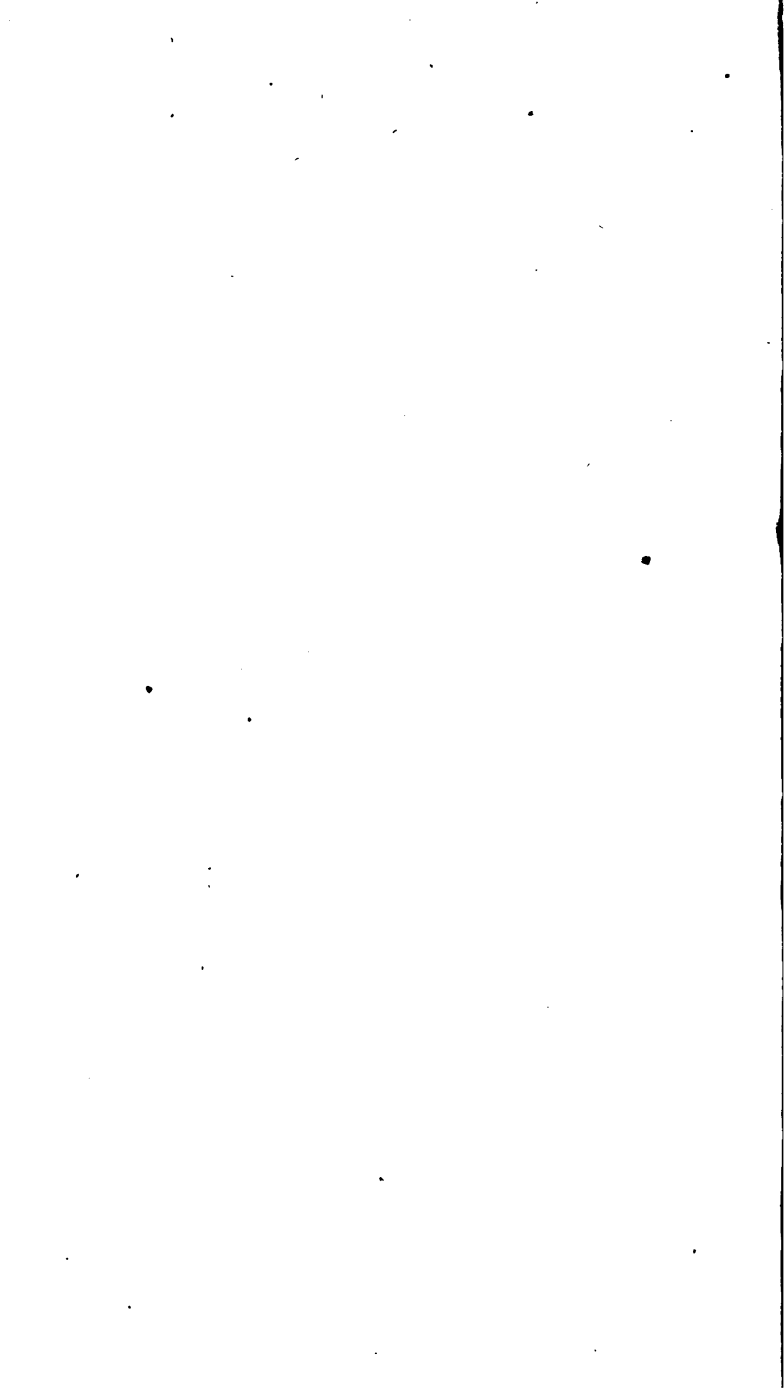
*Nor.* Father, farewell !

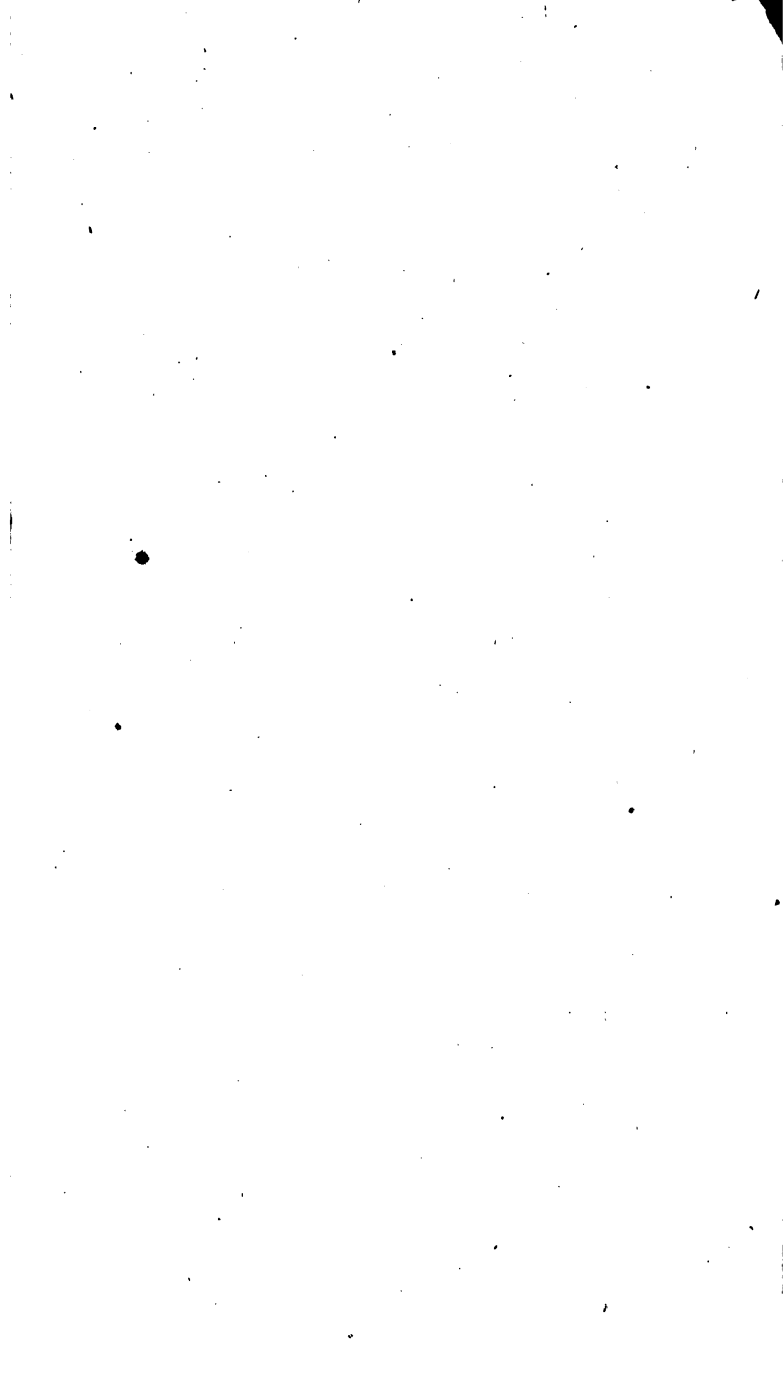
*Cho.* Justice calling to torments dire,  
Lights the altar with penal fire.  
Victims hence ! ascend the pyre !

*Cl.* Farewell ! grateful to my fate I bow.  
Thus—as a Roman may I perish now !  
(*Stabs himself and falls, while Norma is veiled.*)

*Cho.* Ah ! he falls ! But Norma thou  
Must feel the God of vengeance now !

THE CURTAIN FALLS.







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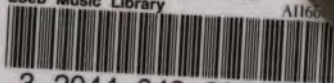
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